

**IN THE SPECIFICATION:**

*On page 1, prior to line 5, please insert the following headings and paragraph:*

**--Cross Reference to Related Applications**

This application is for entry into the U.S. national phase under §371 for International Application No. PCT/IB02/05235 having an international filing date of December 10, 2002 and from which priority is claimed under all applicable sections of Title 35 of the United States Code including, but not limited to, Sections 120, 363 and 365(c).

**Technical Field--**

*On page 1, prior to line 11, please insert the following heading:*

**--Background of the Invention--**

*On page 1, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 17 as follows:*

--In normal cases the game has to be interrupted or even terminated. Some game applications allow to store the game status, so that the game partners are allowed to continue the game later at the same status. The game partner, however, [[have]] has to interrupt the game anyway, especially if the game relies on only two game partners.--

*On page 3, prior to line 2, please insert the following heading:*

**--Summary of the Invention--**

*On page 4, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 18 as follows:*

--By monitoring the inputs of at least one participant of said multi-player game, while the player is still participating in said game, it can easily be determined how probable it is that the player is going to win or loose the game. By analyzing said inputs according to game specific parameters the gaming characteristics of said at least one monitored player can be determined. In accordance with the actually used game parameters such as accuracy, performance, strategies and preferred key combinations this behavior can be individually determined for

each of the participants. With [[this]] these parameters the participation of the absent player can be simulated in a very lifelike manner in correspondence with said determined gaming characteristics.--

*On page 9, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 7 as follows:*

--It is to be noted that in the ~~preceding~~ specification only the case of one player leaving the game party is described. It is clear that the disclosed methods and procedures can be repeated if another game partner or more than one of the game partners are leaving the game party, in a similar manner.--

*On page 9, prior to line 21, please insert the following heading:*

--Brief Description of the Drawings--

*On page 9, prior to line 34, please insert the following heading:*

--Detailed Description--

*On page 10, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 12 as follows:*

--The presented usage case relates to a multi party game offered and arranged e.g. on a network like the Internet. The network ~~is having~~ has a star topology. The actual game logic and an intelligent component is located in the server 22 which controls the game flow and ensures the data exchange 20 between different game partners 24, 26, 28. The server 22 controls also the availability of the participants and the handshaking procedure, when a new gaming partner (not shown) is going to join the game or even would like to leave the game round. The server controls also the status of connection of the clients (mobile gaming users). If one client gets out of coverage or range (temporarily or permanently) the server can recognize it within a reasonable time period. This time period will of course depend on the type of the game. Turn-by-turn games like e.g. chess can tolerate a longer period in comparison with fast shooting or jump and run games.--

*On page 10, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 35 as follows:*

--In addition to that, the server 22 can check the availability of the game partners 24, 26, 28 by testing their connection periodically. If one of the users or game devices 24, 26, 28 loses the connection 20 caused by some reasons (e.g. no coverage temporarily), the server 22 will then takeover the role of the lost gaming partner automatically. If the gaming partner returns back the round, it has first to register itself to the server 22. The server 22 will then check, if it is possible to hand over the game party back to the returned user. If yes, it will send the latest game status to the user and handover the game back to him.--

*On page 11, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 6 as follows:*

--Another usage scenario deals with multi party games initiated by one mobile gaming partner using a wireless communication means for game data exchange purposes. The wireless means could be Bluetooth, GPRS (general packet radio service), UMTS (Universal Mobile Telephone Standard), Wireless LAN (Local Area Network), infra red and the like. No matter which connectivity means is used for such a gaming party, one of the game ~~partner~~ partners has to act as a server and control the data exchange between different partners. The gaming device acting as server 22 for such game, will play the same role as the network based (centralized) server 22, described in the above paragraph. However, here are some additional aspects that should be taken into account.--

*On page 11, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 29 as follows:*

--Figure 2 shows the conventional interwoven topology of an electronic multi-player game. The star topology comprises a number of interface devices 24, 26, 26 being interconnected.. According to different embodiments this topology can be embodied as shown as a number of ~~[[Game]]~~ game enabled phone devices being interconnected 20 via telephone or short range radio. ~~In difference to~~ Unlike the star topology, the present interwoven structure is characterized by a distributed game program exchanging the moves between the single interface devices. If the connection is interrupted, the signal exchange is interrupted and the part of the game or the simulation that represents the other players is interrupted. In case of a team play, this interruption may be perceived as disturbing, but in the case of a concurrence game, the interruption may lead to an unfair advantage of one concurrent.--

*On page 12, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 7 as follows:*

--All the described topologies have in common, that ~~[[if]]~~ for a multi-player game with a minimum of required players, that is the number of active players falls below the critical minimum, the game is to be interrupted or paused. This is independent of the reason of the decrease of the players. In case of an elimination game, the reached minimum usually defines the end of the game. If the minimum is reached because of an interruption or termination of a player or a connection breakdown, there is actually no way to continue the game in a fair manner.--

*On page 12, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 22 as follows:*

--The depicted flowchart can basically be divided into three parts, the conventional game part depicted in the double outlined boxes 40, 44 and 46, the part of the basic invention depicted in the bold outlined boxes 44, 54 and 58 and additional step features 42, 48, 50, 52, 56, 60, 62 and 64 depicted in normal outlined boxes. An electronic game is usually based on a start option for a one or multi-player mode. One player modes of electronic games are ~~[[no]]~~ not the subject of the present invention and are therefore not discussed in the following. The electronic game is therefore started in a multi-player mode 40. The multi-player game option is e.g. known as the “vs.” or versus mode of an electronic game. Conventionally, if one of the players leaves the game 44 to carry out some short time actions such as accepting a telephone call, or the like, the game is paused 46 until the return of the player. Alternatively the game is ended, if the player can not return. Such scenarios are well known to anyone playing multi-player electronic games. If the gaming device or the interface device of the game is implemented in a telephone, it is very likely that a user interrupts a running game to accept a phone call. This has the drawback that a remote other player can not easily recognize~~[[,]]~~ that the user is actually pausing and how long this break is going to be. The present invention can e.g. be optionally activated by a “failsafe”-option 42 in the setting menu of the electronic game. The “failsafe” option may also be automatically activated if an online, network or remote game mode is activated. If the reason for the break of one player is e.g. an incoming phone call or a message which the user wants to be displayed, the acceptance of the phone

call/message display can lead to the automatic start of the fail safe option. However, the user might have activated the feature in such a way that the gaming device asks for confirmation that the game shall be continued automatically if the user accepts the incoming call or reads the message.--